

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 REYKJA 00026 051942Z

66

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 PRS-01 SCI-06 PM-07 NSC-10

SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 SSO-00 L-03 DRC-01 /098 W

----- 026667

R 051920Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4229

INFO USMISSION NATO

CINCLANT

COMICEDEFOR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE REYKJAVIK 0026

STATE FOR EUR/NE AND AIDAC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MILI SENV IC

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE VOLCANIC ERUPTION: PROBABLE REQUEST FOR
IDF ASSISTANCE

REF: REYKJAVIK 1524

1. ICELANDIC CIVIL DEFENSE AUTHORITIES HAVE BECOME CONCERNED AT SEISMIC INDICATIONS OF POSSIBLE ERUPTION OF VOLCANO KATLA, LOCATED ABOUT 90 AIR MILES SOUTHEAST OF REYKJAVIK. THEY HAVE APPROACHED IDF AND ASKED WHETHER, IF IT BECAME NECESSARY, IDF COULD ASSIST IN EVACUATING RESIDENTS OF AREA. FOR POLITICAL-MILITARY REASONS AS WELL AS HUMANITARIANISM, THIS EMBASSY BELIEVES IT IS IMPORTANT TO REPLY POSITIVELY.

2. KATLA'S CONE IS LOCATED NEAR SOUTH COAST OF ICELAND ABOUT TWELVE MILES NORTH OF SMALL TOWN OF VIK, AND IS COVERED BY GLACIAL ICE APPROXIMATELY 1300 FEET THICK. IN ITS MANY HISTORIC ERUPTIONS, PRIMARY DANGERS TO INHABITANTS OF AREA HAVE COME FROM FLASH FLOODING FROM MELTING ICE AND FROM ASHFALL. DEPENDING ON VIOLENCE AND TYPE OF ERUPTION, NUMBERS AFFECTED NOT LIKELY TO EXCEED 200 FAMILIES OR APPROXIMATELY 500 PERSONS.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 REYKJA 00026 051942Z

3. STUDY BY IDF, AFTER APPROACH BY ABOVE-MENTIONED CIVIL DEFENSE AUTHORITIES, INDICATES MAXIMUM ROLE IT SHOULD PLAY IN SUPPLEMENTING GOI RESCUE EFFORTS WOULD BE 48 HOURS OF OPERATIONS WITH TWO HELOS (FOR EVACUATION), TWO FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT (FOR AERIAL SPOTTING).

AND THREE SURFACE VEHICLES (ONE FUEL TRUCK, ONE FIRE TRUCK, AND ONE RADIO EQUIPMENT VEHICLE) CONSTITUTING ADVANCE BASE NUCLEUS FOR REFUELING AND SERVICING IDF EQUIPMENT. MAXIMUM ACTUAL OUT-OF-POCKET COST TO IDF WOULD BE APPROXIMATELY \$11,000 WHICH MAINLY FOR HELO FUEL, A TYPE NOT USED BY ICELANDERS, OR IF EXPENSES COMPUTED ON DEFENSE DEPT COST-USE FORMULA, \$30,000. ICELAND'S CAPABILITY CONSISTS OF ONLY ONE FIVE-PASSENGER HELO.

4. LOCATION, PREVIOUS ACTIVITY OF THIS VOLCANO, AND NUMBER OF PERSONS INVOLVED MAKE IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY ERUPTION WOULD CONSTITUTE NATIONAL DISASTER ON ORDER OF 1973 WESTMANN ISLAND VOLCANO. ANY IDF ACTIVITY SHOULD CLEARLY BE TO ASSIST AND NOT REPLACE GOI EFFORTS. ON OTHER HAND, ICELANDERS WOULD EXPECT IDF TO RESPOND IN SAME WAY THEY WOULD EXPECT FROM DEFENSE FORCE OF THEIR OWN, OR ANY NEIGHBOR WHO HAD FACILITIES TO ASSIST, AND IN SAME MANNER AS IDF'S SAR ACTIVITY WHICH IS HUMANITARIAN AND WITHOUT COST TO GOI. GRATITUDE AND ESPECIALLY GOVT-EXPRESSED GRATITUDE IS ALWAYS SHORT-LIVED

BUT FAILURE TO ACT WOULD BE DISASTROUS FOR IMAGE OF IDF AND USG. REFUSAL ON OUR PART WOULD SERIOUSLY PREJUDICE PUBLIC AND PARLIAMENTARY OPINION REGARDING IDF RETENTION AT A CRUCIAL PERIOD.

5. SINCE OUR PROMPT HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE IN WESTMANN ISLANDS ERUPTION WAS ONE OF IMPORTANT FACTORS IN POSTPONING BY ALMOST A YEAR CRUNCH NEGOTIATIONS ON IDF RETENTION, WE BELIEVE PRUDENCE DICTATES OUR INDICATING WILLINGNESS IN PRINCIPLE TO RESPOND ON SIMILAR BASIS TO CALL FOR LIMITED ASSISTANCE WHICH KATLA ERUPTION WOULD REQUIRE.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: REQUEST APPROVAL TO REPLY TO GOI CIVIL DEFENSE AUTHORITIES THAT IN PRINCIPLE JOINT CONTINGENCY PLANNING CAN GO FORWARD ON BASIS OF LIMITED IDF ASSISTANCE OUTLINED ABOVE. USG SHOULD AGREE AMONG OURSELVES THAT WE WILL NOT THEN BILL GOI FOR OUR ASSISTANCE. IRVING

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEDICAL CARE, NATURAL DISASTERS, EMERGENCY PLANNING, EARTHQUAKES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974REYKJA00026
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: REYKJAVIK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740160/aaaacewf.tel
Line Count: 99
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: REYKJAVIK 1524
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 MAY 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <23 MAY 2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSSIBLE VOLCANIC ERUPTION: PROBABLE REQUEST FOR IDF ASSISTANCE
TAGS: MILI, SENV, IC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005